

Haresbrook Farm, Tockenham

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey Report



14th April 2026
(Update 13th July 2026)

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The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to work

Executive Summary

Purpose of the report

To provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed development site, involving,

- Evaluation of its conservation status based on a desktop review that summarises information collated on protected species and nature conservation designations in the area.
- Assessment of habitat composition on site, derived from a UKHabitat 2.0 survey.
- Assessment of the likelihood of protected, or otherwise notable, species occurring on site.

Context of the development

The proposed development:

- Construction of a barn (proposed permitted development)
- Construction of a wash station, a barn apron and a Polytunnel.

Methods

The project requirement was to assess the existing ecological value of the site, identify potential ecological issues associated with the proposed development and make recommendations for general mitigation, compensation, enhancement and further surveys, as appropriate. A desk study and a UKHabitat 2.0 survey were carried out.

Key issues

The Site had MODERATE potential for amphibians (in their terrestrial phase). It had LOW potential for reptiles and MODERATE potential for terrestrial mammals, including the European badger. It also had MODERATE foraging and commuting potential for bats and HIGH bird breeding potential along the maturing trees and hedgerow.

Further surveys required

None

Conclusions

A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been completed and is submitted as a separate report.

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

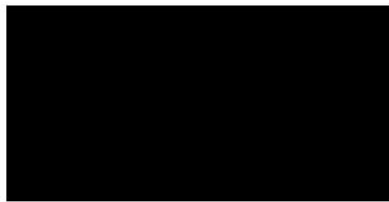
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Signature:



Lead ecologist & Report writer: Samuel Horner BSc

Signature:



Date: 14th April 2026

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. In February 2026, Wessex Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Ben Truswell to undertake an ecological appraisal of an agricultural field ~300m southeast of Tockenham, a small village in Wiltshire. The purpose of the survey was to provide an assessment of the current ecological conditions and to evaluate the ecological constraints in order to inform development proposals.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify key ecological constraints, in order to inform the project planning such that significant ecological impacts are avoided or minimised. It also aims to highlight any further ecological surveys that may be required to inform any future Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), so that they can be appropriately designed. Finally, the report aims to provide the information required in order to develop appropriate mitigation or compensation measures.

1.2. Site description

- 1.2.1. Haresbrook Farm, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', measures approximately 2.5ha and is situated on Greenway, which runs to the north of the Site (approximate OS grid reference: SU 04364 79038), see Figure 1 below.
- 1.2.2. The site is comprised of an agricultural field for livestock, crops and its associated hedgerows. Several temporary structures have been erected for farming related use i.e. housing livestock, storage, working etc. The site of proposed development consists partially of permeable hard standing and predominantly of grassland.
- 1.2.3. The proposed developments and alterations to the site are as followed:
- Planting of willow scrub and mixed scrub
 - Constructions of a wash station, a barn apron and a Polytunnel.

A barn is proposed to be built under permitted development. This has not been considered within this report or the BNG calculations as the qualification for permitted development would omit it from the regular planning process. Nevertheless, recommendations for mitigations are given in regard to this under section 5.

Figure 1. Site location with the red line boundary.



2. Planning & Legislation

2.1. Legislation

The following legislation informed the survey approach and considerations.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Environment Act 2021

2.2. Planning policies

- 2.2.1. This report is prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework 2024

3. Methods

3.1. Desk study

- 3.1.1. The following publicly accessible websites were searched for relevant ecological information:
- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
 - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1376> (summary of nature conservation legislation)
 - www.ukbap.org.uk (archived 2012)
 - www.gridreferencefinder.com for aerial photography
 - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>
- 3.1.2. Data relating to statutory & non-statutory sites and all protected species records within 1km of the red line boundary was requested from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biodiversity Records Centre (WSBRC).

3.2. Field survey

- 3.2.1. A UKHab 2.0 habitat survey of the site was undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).
- 3.2.2. The survey was conducted on the 4th February 2026 by Samuel Horner and Aaron Jones.
- 3.2.3. The weather conditions were good with an average temperature of 6°C.
- 3.2.4. During the survey, dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the UKHab 2.0 user's handbook. Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence or habitat suitable for any legally protected species was recorded, where appropriate.
- 3.2.5. The presence of any Category 9 invasive non-native plant species was recorded.
- 3.2.6. The results are presented in the standard format with habitat descriptions and a UK Hab 2.0 map (see Figure 3).
- 3.2.7. The site was inspected for direct evidence and habitat suitability for protected and notable species. Particular attention was given to those species listed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This included searching for signs of badger activity and habitats suitable for amphibians, dormice, bats and reptiles.
- 3.2.8. In the event that habitats suitable for protected species are identified, it may be necessary to undertake further seasonal surveys to confirm

presence/likely absence. In the event that no suitable habitats or features are identified, a walkover assessment is sufficient to determine the potential impacts associated with a proposed development.

3.3. Limitations

- 3.3.1. The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that species and habitats not found in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 3.3.2. The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

4. Baseline Ecological conditions

4.1. Desk study

- 4.1.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there was no statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site.
- 4.1.2. The MAGIC data search showed no EPSLs have been granted within 1km of the site.
- 4.1.3. Protected species records for the following taxa recorded within 1 km of the Site are set out in Table 1, below.

Table 1. Protected species records within 1km of the Site.

Species name	Number of records
Birds	
fieldfare	2
hobby	1
hoopoe	2
house sparrow	1
lapwing	1
linnet	1
red kite	1
skylark	3
swift	3
Mammals	
badger	8
bat	1
Brandt's bat	2
brown hare	2
brown long-eared	4
hedgehog	1
Natterer's	1
pipistrelle	3
water vole	1
whiskered	3
Reptiles	
grass snake	1
slow worm	1
Plants	
bluebell	8

4.2. Site survey

4.2.1. Habitat type and areas recorded on and adjacent to the Site are set out in Table 2, below.

4.2.2. A UKHab 2.0 map of the site is set out in Figure 2 below.

Table 2. UKHab 2.0 types recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

UKHabitat type	Species recorded	Percentage present
c – cropland	N/A	N/A
u1 – Urban 510 - bare ground	N/A	N/A
g4 – modified grassland	Cocks foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>) Perennial rye (<i>Lolium perenne</i>) Tufted hair grass (<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>) <i>Galium</i> sp. Hedgerow Crane's-bill (<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>) Hairy bitter cress (<i>Cardamine hirsute</i>) Creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>) Common Hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>)	35% 25% 20% 5% 5% 5% 4% 1%
h2 - hedgerow	Salix sp. Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>) Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) Dogrose (<i>Rosa canina</i>)	40% 40% 7.5% 7.5% 2% 2% 1%
u1c – artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface	N/A	N/A

4.2.3. No category 9 invasive plants were recorded within the survey area.

Figure 2. UKHab 2.0 map of the Site with redline survey boundary.

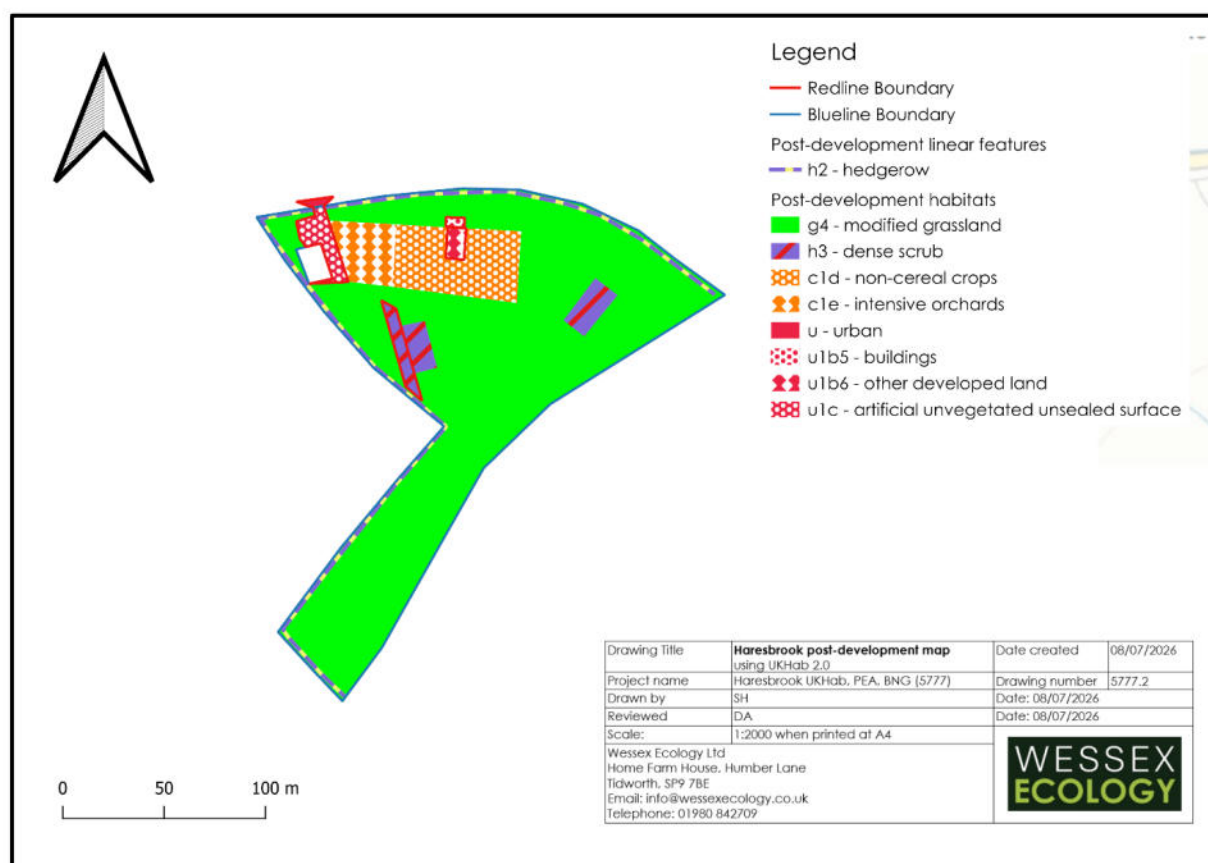


4.2.4. Table 3 contains details of the target notes in Figure 2 above.

Table 3. UKHab 2.0 types recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

Target Note	Type	Species
1	Tree	Veteran ash
2	Field shelter	N/A
3	Field shelter	N/A
4	Temporary works shelter	N/A
5	Field shelter	N/A
6	Sheds & materials	N/A
7	Polytunnel and chicken hut	N/A

Figure 3. UKHab 2.0 map of the Site with redline survey boundary.



4.2.5. The Target notes of field structures are not marked on the map in figure 3 because they will move regularly with no fixed positions. The size of the structures has been input into the BNG metric. Target note 1 (veteran Ash) is not within the vicinity of the scope of the works.

4.2.6. Table 4 contains details of the potential for protected species and groups to be present.

Table 4. Protected species potential on Site.

Species (group)	Habitat availability	Records	Impact assessment
Amphibians	MODERATE	No.	MODERATE for foraging and commuting in their terrestrial phase. A large pond ~20m from the site's border. No access was available to the pond. No records of amphibians were given within 1km. Habitat potentially used by amphibians will be lost or damaged by the proposed works.
Badgers	MODERATE foraging and commuting	yes.	No evidence recorded on Site. Open grassland habitat can be used by badgers for commuting and foraging.

Bats	MODERATE foraging & commuting	Brandt's bat, brown long-eared, Natterer's, pipistrelle, whiskered	HIGH roosting potential in the Veteran Ash Tree (Target note 1), but the tree will be retained. Moderate commuting and foraging potential along the hedgerows and river directly adjacent to the site.
Birds	HIGH	fieldfare, hobby, hoopoe, lapwing, red kite, skylark, swift	Habitat recorded on Site was suitable for passerine species. Hedgerow offers ample nesting opportunity for common bird species. Birds might build nests in the field shelters, these are not directly involved in the scope of the works, advice on how to manage this scenario is given in section 5.4. Fauna. The client gave anecdotal evidence of pellets found on site. Target note 6 could offer a nesting opportunity to schedule 1 species. No nesting bird habitat will be affected by the works.
Dormice	NEGLIGIBLE	No.	Suitable hedgerows on site but they are not connected to wider habitats of scrub or woodland.
Otter	Low	No.	Suitable habitat on the watercourse that runs ~10m from the edge of the site. The works will not affect the water course.
Reptiles	Low	grass snake, slow worm	Grassland on site could be used by reptiles but offers little edge habitat and opportunities. Consistent vegetation height and lack permanent hibernacula is not favourable. Habitat on site is likely only to be used by commuting reptiles.
Water vole	Low	No	Suitable habitat on the watercourse that runs ~10m from the edge of the site.

5. Ecological constraints and opportunities

5.1. Designated nature conservation sites

- 5.2.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were no statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site.

5.3. Habitats

- 5.3.1. The proposed development of the Site will result in the loss of some of the existing homogenous habitats on Site, principally areas of g4 – modified grassland. This habitat is of poor quality, and the surrounding habitat is dominated by grassland, so the loss of habitat is limited to site level.
- 5.3.2. The watercourse habitat offsite to the east will not be influenced by the development due to its distance. Care will be taken to ensure that chemicals used for agricultural practices are stored safely and do not run off into the watercourse.
- 5.3.3. None of the individual, broadleaved trees are marked for removal.

5.4. Fauna

- 5.4.1. The Site predominantly had LOW to MODERATE potential for protected species.
- 5.4.2. Any protected species associated with the water course will not be impacted by the proposed developments due to the distance between the works and the watercourse habitat. The most invasive of the works, involving developing urban habitats is proposed for the northwestern area of the site where the habitat was open grassland. Water voles and otters are unlikely to be inhabiting/commuting within that area.
- 5.4.3. Bird nesting potential was HIGH. The temporary buildings on site are planned to be moved semi-regularly as 'portable' field shelters, they are not within the direct scope of this development. If these structures are planned to be moved it should be done outside of the bird nesting season. If a bird nest has been built within a structure planned for relocation in the future, a suitably qualified ecologist will be sought for further advice prior to its relocation. The veteran Ash tree and hedgerows will not be impacted by the works, and no breeding habitat will be impacted.
- 5.4.4. Amphibians and reptiles could be affected by the development during the construction of urban habitats such as the barn, barn apron and cropfields. There were no amphibians recorded within 1km but there are records within the wider area. There is a pond on the other side of Greenway Road. Due to

the proximity of the pond, potential for amphibians on site is considered to be moderate although due to a lack of records, potential for great crested newt is considered to be LOW. In addition, low potential for reptiles with nearby records were identified. Mitigation will be implemented to protect amphibians and reptiles during the works:

- The contractor's site foreman will ensure that at the end of each working day and groundwork excavations will be fenced with newt barriers to prevent any access by any amphibians. All excavations will have a scaffold plank set in to act as an exit route for any animal which falls in.
- The removal of vegetation will be completed in two phases during the active season, typically, 1st March – 31st October and will take place during suitable weather. The first phase of this habitat removal is for it to be cut to a 10cm length using hand tools to ensure the area is sub-optimal habitat for this group of species. The works will be supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist and any common species encountered will be moved to a safe location.
- Should any great crested newt (GCN) be encountered during any phase of the clearance or construction, works will immediately stop and the lead ecologist will be notified. A mitigation licence may be required to proceed with the works.
- The second phase will involve the complete removal of vegetation to ground level as to make the site unsuitable for amphibians and reptiles.
- If there is any structured vegetation at ground level, a destructive search may be required comprising a small digger with a toothed bucket gently scraping back the vegetation layer to reveal the soil below. Following this, works may proceed without supervision.

5.4.5. The site was assessed to be NEGLIGIBLE for dormice. The hedgerows on site are of good quality habitat and offer opportunities for dormice, but they lack connectivity to wider habitat and will be retained in the proposed development so no further survey work or mitigation is required.

5.4.6. The temporary buildings on site were assessed to have NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential. The veteran ash tree was HIGH for bat roost potential, but it is not considered within the scope of the works and will not be affected. No further bat survey work is required.

5.4.7. No potential badger setts were recorded on or adjacent to the site. Foraging and commuting of badgers will not be affected by the proposed works as there is still suitable wider habitat in the south of the field. Mitigation should be implemented to protect badgers during the works:

- The contractor's site foreman will ensure that at the end of each working day and groundwork excavations will be fenced with Heras fencing to prevent any access by badgers or other terrestrial mammals. All excavations will have a scaffold plank set in to act as an exit route for any animal which falls in.

5.4.8. There should be no additional external lighting to ensure that there is no change to the ambient night-time light levels as a result of the proposed development.

6. References

- CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*; CIEEM
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- Harris, S., Cresswell, P. & Jeffries, D. (1989) *Surveying Badgers – An occasional publication of the mammal society – No. 9*. Mammal Society, London
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- Rose, F. (1981) *The Wild Flower Key*; Frederick Warne
- Rose, F. (1989) *Colour Identification Guide to the Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns of the British Isles and North Western Europe*; Viking
- UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (<https://www.ukhab.org/>)

7. Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – Site photographs

Photo 1 – Works/storage area in the northwestern corner of the field.



Photo 2 – View of one of the pig pens facing southeast.



Photo 3 – View of one of the pig pens facing north.



Photo 4 – View of the river/stream that runs ~10m from the site boundary.



Photo 5 – Hedgerow that runs along Greenway Road adjacent to the site.



Photo 6 – View of structures in the field used by goats.



Photo 7 – Southwest corner of the field used by goats.



Photo 8 – Ash tree Target note 1.

